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ABSTRACT

The focus of this document, one in a series of consumer education materials for 4-H Club members and secondary students, is supermarkets, food, and purchasing. The materials in the series are based on the philosophy that teenagers need the training and guidance to develop the skills needed to become competent consumers. The supermarket project focuses upon four major objectives: help students gain an understanding of ways to save money on the food bill; enable students to learn how to use the facts on labels to help them buy the best product; acquaint students with some of the new supermarket tools--unit pricing, open dating, and nutritional labeling; and acquaint students with how the tools can best help the food shopper. The document is divided into two sections. The first section is the teacher's guide which contains a statement of purpose, objectives, ideas, suggested resources, learning activities, and evaluation. The second section is the student material which contains background reading and learning activities. (Author/JR)

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SUPERMARKET PROJECT

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FLORIDA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, GAINESVILLE

TEACHING GUIDE

EXPLORING YOUR WORLD

4-H SI SUPERMARKET PROJECT

SPECIAL INTEREST TEACHING GUIDE

Suggestions and Information
Pertaining to the Following Topics:

Supermarket Shopping

Reading Labels

Unit Pricing

Open Dating

Nutritional Labeling

FLORIDA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, GAINESVILLE

SPECIAL INTEREST TEACHING GUIDE
EXPLORING YOUR WORLD
4-H SI SUPERMARKET PROJECT

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Food makes up one of the biggest categories in family spending. Nearly 16% of after-tax income is spent for food. Even though the amount of after-tax income spent for food has decreased over the years, there is much concern about rising food costs. The reason is that even a small rise in the price of food, when applied to a big chunk of spending, has a major impact. Thus, an understanding of the many and varied aspects involved in food shopping is necessary if one is to be an informed shopper in the supermarket.

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OBJECTIVES OF SUPERMARKET PROJECT

To help the special interest 4-H members gain an understanding of ways to save money on the food bill.

To enable the special interest 4-H members to learn how to use the facts on labels to help them buy the product that's best for them.

To acquaint the special interest 4-H members with some of the new supermarket shopping tools -- unit pricing, open dating, and nutritional labeling.

To acquaint the special interest 4-H members with how these new shopping tools can help the food shopper.

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IDEAS TO TEACH IN SUPERMARKET PROJECT

Food is one of the largest single expenses for a family. The information on labels can help you buy the product that's right for you.

Unit pricing is a means of telling the shopper the cost of a particular unit of an item.

Open dating is a date on a packaged food product that can be read and understood by a shopper.

Nutritional labeling tells you about the nutrition of processed foods.

Much can be saved on the food bill if the shopper is aware of and uses the available shopping tools.

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SUGGESTED RESOURCES

People

The manager of a local supermarket is an excellent resource person for the supermarket project. A supermarket manager would be best utilized at the end of the project. In this way the youngsters will have studied about supermarket shopping and will have questions to ask.

Places

A local supermarket would be an excellent place for an educational tour. This will give the youngsters an opportunity to read labels, look for open dating, practice using unit pricing and study the layout of the supermarket, among other things.

Literature

SHARPEN UP YOUR SHOPPING -- FOOD
Florida Cooperative Extension Service.
Request from your County Extension 4-H Coordinator. (EHE 132) Free

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ACTIVITIES FOR LEARNING EXPERIENCES

The supermarket project contains five lessons. The topics for the lessons were selected to help the 4-H members gain a better understanding of the various aspects of supermarket shopping.

The member pieces prepared for this project contain much information. You will find that they can be used as a guide for class discussion. Due to the extent of the content of the leaflets, only activities not mentioned in them will be listed below. Of course, one activity that goes without mention is to have the 4-H members read the material in each leaflet.

1. A local supermarket manager can add much to this series by speaking about supermarkets, i.e., merchandising items, advertising, re-stocking of shelves, unit pricing, open dating, etc. You might ask him to tell of some of the customer abuses and the cost to the supermarket. He might also like to tell about the temperature control necessary for dairy products, meats, and frozen foods.

   It would be good if you would ask the supermarket manager to speak about jobs for teens in supermarkets. He might also want to tell about careers in this area.

2. Open dating of milk and milk products is now a reality in Florida. You will want to spend some time discussing this new law.

** Effective Date of Law
October 1, 1972

** Meaning of Date
The date used is the pull date. Thus, the date appearing on the container indicates the date the item must be removed from the shelf for sale. The pull date is 10 days after the processing date.

** Indication of Date
The pull date can be expressed in one of four ways.
June 1
0601
06 01
06-01

** Placement of Date
The date is to be placed in a conspicuous location and must be legible. The size of the lettering is determined by the size of the container. (Due to sweating of containers, ink is usually not used for the date. Look for an imprint of the date, particularly on milk containers.)

** Life of Product After Pull Date
The product is to be of a quality that will remain in good condition for 96 hours (4 days) at 45°F. after the pull date. Of course, milk and milk products that are properly refrigerated at 40°F. or lower will remain good even longer than four days beyond the pull date.

** Report Complaints To:
Florida Department of Agriculture
and Consumer Services
Department of Dairy Regulations
Mayo Building
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

3. Have your students bring empty milk and milk product containers to class. In this way they can study the placement of the pull date on various containers.

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EVALUATION OF LEARNING

You will no doubt want to evaluate the educational experience this series gave your students. Below are some suggestions for evaluations. You may want to pre-test as well as post-test your students. (The answers are given for your convenience.)

Matching

g	1. the last day a store may offer an item for sale.	a. code dating
k	2. the cost of a particular unit of an item.	b. label
T	3. a food that has had something done to it between being picked and sold to you.	c. pack date
d	4. any date on a packaged food product that can be read and understood by the shopper.	d. open dating
b	5. the "window" on a can.	e. nutritional label
c	6. the date of manufacturing, processing, or final packaging.	f. essential nutrients
f	7. things like vitamins, minerals, protein and fat.	g. pull date
J	8. the date that means "Do not use after date shown".	h. shelf tag
a	9. any date on a packaged food product that cannot be read and understood by the shopper.	i. freshness date
h	10. means used to tell shoppers the unit price of an item.	j. expiration date
		k. unit price
		l. processed food

Multiple Choice

b 1. The pull date required on milk containers indicates that the milk was processed --
a. 4 days b. 10 days c. 12 days ...before the date on the container.

c 2. Milk should last 96 hours (4 days) after the pull date at a maximum temperature of --
a. 50°F b. 45°C c. 45°F d. 40°F

d 3. Reading labels helps you --
a. buy products for their intended use.
b. buy the amount needed for the size of your family.
c. know what ingredients you're paying for.
d. all of the above.
e. a and b above.

b 4. A quality assurance or freshness date indicates --
a. the last day the store may offer the food for sale.
b. until the date shown, the product will be the same quality as when it left the processing plant.
c. the date of manufacturing, processing, or final packaging.

True-False

T 1. There are certain facts required by law on all labels.
T 2. Nutritional labeling will add more facts than are now on labels.
T 3. It becomes hard to determine food value when several foods are used in one product, like pizza and fruit coctail.
F 4. If water is listed first on a list of ingredients, this indicates that water is the least predominent ingredient in the food product.
F 5. The information on labels of foods imported from another country does not have to be written in English.
T 6. Open dating tells the shopper how fresh a product is.

Essay

Pretend that you've been given total responsibility for food buying for your family for the next month. What steps would you take to be sure of getting the most for your food dollars? What supermarket shopping tools would you make use of?

* * * * *

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MEMBER PIECES

exploring your world

SUPERMARKET SHOPPING

You probably are not the major food purchaser in your family. But it won't be too much longer until you'll be out on your own. Now is a good time for you to learn a little about supermarket shopping. Perhaps you'll even be able to help with the family shopping and practice some money saving tips.

Food is one of the largest expenses for a family. It's estimated that the average family spends as much as 20% of their income for food. For a low income family, the percentage can be as high as 45%. Since so much money is left at the supermarket, you need to learn how to feel you're getting your money's worth in food.

MONEY SAVING STEPS

READ YOUR SUPERMARKET ADS.
Food retailing is a highly competitive field. Supermarkets are always having sales to try to get you to come to their store. Take advantage of every reduction in price for those items you need. One word of caution though. The cost of driving to widely scattered supermarkets can eat up your savings in a hurry, regardless of the fantastic specials!

MAKE OUT MENUS FOR THE NEXT WEEK.
Let the weekly specials be your menu guide. Your menus needn't be lengthy. A quick list of your meals will do.

MAKE A SHOPPING LIST.
Check to see what foods you have. Then decide what you'll need to fix the meals you've planned. Try to make your list complete.

TAKE YOUR LIST TO THE SUPERMARKET AND 'STICK WITH IT.
Some people find a supermarket a fascinating place. They buy lots of things they don't need.

NEVER GO SHOPPING WHEN YOU'RE HUNGRY.
Or you'll buy more than you planned. The pictures on food items look appetizing anyway. They'll look even better when you're hungry!

CHECK OUT FOOD AND NON-FOOD ITEMS SEPARATELY
Out of every dollar spent at the supermarket 20¢ is spent for things you can't eat.

COMPARE PACKAGE SIZE.
Check the unit price of the different package sizes. Often money can be saved if you buy the largest size. But make sure you have storage room and the item won't spoil before you use it.

COMPARE PRIVATE AND NATIONAL BRANDS.
Most supermarket chains package many products under their own label. The private brands usually sell for less than the heavily advertised national brands. In many cases, the quality is the same. Compare the brands as the the product is needed.

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University of Florida, Gainesville

SOME SUPERMARKET PSYCHOLOGY

Food store owners know about the psychology of buying. They've learned that the layout of the store influences your spending more than anything else.

Let's take a trip through a food store. Be sure to get your shopping cart. You're expected to go into the aisle along the wall first. Supermarket men call this the first perimeter aisle. You'll find brightly colored displays set up to attract you. If you're drawn to the displays, think twice. Is it the item being displayed that you want, or the sign?

Some of the best selling items are put on the perimeter aisles. These include produce, meat, dairy, frozen foods and bakery goods. You'll notice that best-selling items are often displayed across from each other. Lettuce may be placed along the wall. The tomatoes are on the opposite counter. This makes you crisscross the aisle. In doing this your eye may fall on something you hadn't thought you needed (and probably don't).

Certain items attract shoppers no matter where in the store they are placed. The ten best customer attractors are:

1. coffee
2. cookies & crackers
3. canned vegetables
4. baking needs
5. canned soups
6. cereals
7. sugar
8. paper products
9. laundry supplies
10. salad dressings & oils

These goods are placed in the middle aisles near items that don't sell as well. By so doing you're attracted to that part of the store.

Whatever aisle you find yourself in, the store manager has done his best to make sure you don't leave it without picking up one or two "extra" items. The store owner may get you to buy two items instead of one. This is done by placing related products next to each other. You'll see canned milk with baby foods. Powdered cream often will be with coffee. Syrup is placed near pancake mixes. Pretzels and chips go well with soft drinks.

Beware of special displays at the end of aisles. They tend to increase impulse buying. Candy and health and beauty aids are considered the top impulse items. They're placed in those areas of the store where customer traffic is heaviest. A favorite place is near the check-out lanes. You may notice that candy, cookies and crackers are placed on lower shelves. This is for the convenience of children.

Spend the least amount of time you can in the supermarket. The more time you spend, the more money you'll leave in their cash register.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Study the lay-out of a store. Is it arranged to make you want to buy more? How?
2. Help with the family food buying for two weeks. Keep track of the amount spent at the supermarket for food and non-food items.
3. Read the food ads in the paper. Make up some meal plans using the items on special. Figure the cost of these meals for your family.
4. Study your family's food buying habits. See if there are ways the food bill could be reduced. Discuss.
5. Make a collage of supermarket ads.

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INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES

4H Special Interest

SUPERMARKET PROJECT

READING LABELS

Can you imagine shopping in a supermarket where there were no labels on any of the cans or packages? You wouldn't have any idea what you were buying. And, you'd probably end up with some very strange meals!

A label serves as a "window" on a can. It gives you the inside facts on the outside. You'll find lots of information on a label. The information on a label is put there to help you buy the product that's right for you.

FACTS REQUIRED ON LABELS

There are certain facts required by law on all labels. The information that must appear on processed food labels is listed below. Read the facts. Then draw lines connecting the facts with the label at the bottom of the page.

* The product name. This means names like tomatoes, corn, peaches, etc.
* The style, variety and packing medium when relevant. These facts tell you things like whether you're getting sliced or diced carrots; white or yellow variety of corn; or pears packed in water, a light syrup or a heavy syrup.
* The net contents of the container.
* The name, address and zip code of the manufacturer, packer or distributor.
* The facts about any added artificial color, flavor or preservative.
* A list of ingredients. These must be listed in order of their predominance. Some products are not included in this rule. This is because standards of identity have been set by the government.
* Some foods are packed for special diets. When this is the case, the label must list certain things about salt, artificial sweeteners, calories, and other nutrition facts.
* All information on labels must be in English. This includes labels on imported foods, too.

Cocktail Co. Chicago, Ill. Distributor	**Fruit Cocktail** in heavy syrup cherries artificially colored red Net Wt. 17 oz. (1 lb. 1 oz.)	Ingredients peaches, pears, grapes, cherries, heavy syrup of water and sugar

FACTS NOT REQUIRED ON LABELS
...BUT OFTEN FOUND ON LABELS

Often food manufacturers add other facts to their labels You may find such things as:

* The brand name. The manufacturer always puts this on a label. He wants you to be able to easily identify his product.

* A picture of the product. This helps you know the color, size and appearance of what's inside.

* The number of cups, size of pieces or number of servings. Some labels even tell you the size of a certain number of servings. An example is "4 - 1/2 cup servings".

* Instructions for handling and storing.

* Directions for using the product. Sometimes a recipe is given.

* Size or degree of maturity. For example, peas could be said to be very young, young or nearly mature.

* Mention of a recipe book or other printed information available.

* A brief description about the product, like how it's made or packed.

* Nutritional information is likely to be found on labels soon.

READING LABELS HELPS YOU...

... buy products for their intended use. If you're making soup, you wouldn't need to spend extra money on whole fancy tomatoes, since they'll just be chopped up.

... buy products that are the best price for your budget. You need to eat vegetables, but there's a big difference in price between asparagus and corn.

... buy the amount needed for the size of your family. Even though the largest size may cost less per ounce, it won't be cheaper unless you use all of it.

... buy products you want at the supermarket.

... know what ingredients you're paying for. The first ingredient on the list of ingredients is the one which occurs in the greatest amount in a product. So be careful about products listing water as the first ingredient.

... know how much convenience you're getting. Some pre-packaged dinners only need to be heated and served. Others may need extra ingredients added.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Make a collection of labels. Paste each on a separate sheet of paper. List the facts that are on the label. Draw lines to the label to point out each of the facts you've listed. (Don't take labels off cans that haven't been used without asking your mother.)

2. Make a bulletin board display with your class about labels.

3. Go grocery shopping with a member of your family. Practice reading labels and comparing products.

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4H Special Interest

SUPERMARKET PROJECT

UNIT PRICING

WHICH COSTS LESS PER OUNCE?
... an 8 oz. can costing 18¢
... a 12 oz. can costing 27¢
... a 20 oz. can costing 45¢

TO FIND OUT WHICH IS THE BEST BUY... divide the cost by the number of ounces. Use the space below for your figures.

What answer did you get for each example? Did you get the same answer for each? If you got 2.25¢ per ounce for each can, you're right!

Think for a moment -- could you tell that each can was going to be equally as good a buy before dividing the cost by the ounces? If you're like most people, probably not.

Can you imagine dividing the cost by the number of ounces for every item you or your mother buys in the grocery store? That used to be the only way to be certain of getting the best buy. It was a lot of work and took lots of time. So, most shoppers just didn't even bother to try to find which item would cost the least per ounce.

But now there's a new shopping tool. It's called unit pricing. With unit pricing, you don't have to be a math wizard. All you need to do is understand unit pricing and use it. If you use unit pricing, you're sure to always buy the size item that costs the least per ounce.

WHAT IS UNIT PRICING?

Unit pricing is a means of telling the shopper the cost of a particular unit of an item. The unit of measure used may be the ounce, pound, or quart. You'll find most stores use the ounce as the unit of measure.

Shelf tags are used for telling the shopper the unit price. The shelf tags are placed on the front edge of the shelves throughout the supermarket. Most shelf tags contain these facts:

... unit cost of the product
... total cost of the product
... name of the product
... total weight of the product
... computer code number

To the right is an example of a shelf tag showing a unit price. Not all shelf tags look like this one. But they all contain the same kind of information.

WHY USE UNIT PRICING?

The unit price on the various shelf tags make it easier to compare prices on food items. Thus, unit pricing can help shoppers find the best buy as far as the price factor is concerned.

Unit pricing helps shoppers make choices when they have an option among sizes and brands. There are now two important types of comparisons you can make in only seconds.

1. You can compare the cost of the different size cans of a product within the same brand.
2. You can compare the cost of the same product among different brands.

WORDS TO KNOW

UNIT PRICE - the cost of a particular unit of an item. The unit of measure used most often is the ounce.

SHELF TAG - a tag placed on the front of the shelf that tells the shopper the unit price of a product.

GGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Find out which stores in your community have unit pricing.
2. Find out which stores in your community do not have unit pricing. (You probably won't find unit pricing in small grocery stores. This is because of the cost of a computer to figure out the prices.)
3. Explain unit pricing to the person in your family who does the grocery shopping.
4. Go grocery shopping with a member of your family at a store with unit pricing and practice comparing prices by using unit pricing.

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SUPERMARKET PROJECT

OPEN DATING

Take a look at the bottom of some cans of food. You'll find all kinds of strange letters, numbers and symbols! They probably will have no meaning to you or anyone you know. But they mean something to someone. Or, they wouldn't be there.

This is what is called coding. Many of the codes include a production date, the last date of sale, or the shelf life. The codes may also include information like the plant location, the shift, raw material sources, etc. These last few items wouldn't be important to the shopper. But the facts about dates would be.

Code dating does not allow the shopper to know date information about a product. Open dating would.

WHAT IS OPEN DATING?

Open dating means any date on a packaged food product that can be read and understood by the shopper. Open dating is being tried in many stores throughout the country. If you look, you'll find some products with dates you can read. Such dates may be shown in both letters and numbers like FEB 28. Or, they may be shown in numbers only like 2-28 or 0228.

Dates that can be read do appear on some foods. But the shopper may not always know what the date means. This is because a date on a food product could mean any of four things.

1. Pack date -- This is the date of manufacturing, processing or final packaging. It's a known date some time in the past.

2. Pull date -- This is the last day a store may offer the food for sale. This date allows the shopper a good amount of time to store and use the product at home.

3. Quality assurance or Freshness date -- Until the date shown, the product will be the same quality as when it left the processing plant. Sometime after this date the product will no longer be of the best quality.

4. Expiration date -- This means "Do not use after date shown." It's the hardest date of all to determine. This is because a product is not good today and bad tomorrow. The quality declines slowly over a period of time.

It's not known yet which definition of open dating will become widely used. This will depend on the results of the stores testing open dating. But, a date that can be read is of no value unless its meaning is known to shoppers. A date can mean many things. It's important for all dates to mean the same thing.

WHY THE NEED FOR OPEN DATING?

Open dating tells the shopper how fresh a product is. This is most important in buying dairy and bakery products. It's also important for refrigerated dough products and eggs. It's good to know for meat products, too. And, it would be helpful for canned and frozen products.

Open dating could also help the homemaker at home. She would be able to use the oldest products on her shelf first. It's true that most foods are used long before their quality declines too much. But sometimes cans and packages get pushed to the back of the shelf and forgotten. Open dating would help the homemaker know the quality of product to expect.

WORDS TO KNOW

code dating -- any date on a packaged food product that <u>cannot</u> be read and understood by the shopper.

open dating -- any date on a packaged food product that <u>can</u> be read and understood by the shopper.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Look at all the food products at home for dates. Make a list of those with:
-- code dates
-- dates you can read but don't know what they mean
-- dates you can read and know what they mean

2. Go grocery shopping with a member of your family. Look for products with dates you can read. They're often on the bottom of containers. Be careful not to spill anything. If you don't understand a date, ask someone who works in the store.

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exploring your world

NUTRITIONAL LABELING

WHAT IS NUTRITIONAL LABELING?

Nutritional labeling is a new kind of labeling. You probably won't find it on many labels in Florida yet. But, it's something you should know about. Several food stores are trying different styles of labels in other parts of the country. Nutritional labeling is expected to be accepted nationwide soon.

Nutritional labeling will add more facts to labels. It will tell you about the nutrition of processed foods. Processed foods are those that have had something done to them between being picked and sold to you. Bread, canned corn, frozen peas and noodles are examples of processed foods. Can you think of others? List six foods you can buy in supermarkets that have been changed in some way.

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Nutritional labeling will tell you about the amount of essential nutrients in a food. Essential nutrients are things like vitamins, minerals, protein, fat, carbohydrates and calories. Nutrients are found in all our food. We need a certain amount of each every day to be healthy.

WHY DO WE NEED NUTRITIONAL LABELING?

Most of our foods used to be unprocessed. It's easy to analyze the value of a single food such as tomatoes, chicken, carrots, etc. But when the form of the food is changed through processing like freezing, drying or canning, it becomes hard to determine the food value. When several foods are used in one product such as frozen pizzas or canned fruit cocktail, it's really hard to figure out what the actual nutritive value is.

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University of Florida, Gainesville

One reason then for nutritional labeling is to make it possible for you to know what nutrients you're getting in foods. By using the nutritional labeling, you can combine many processed foods and be sure of eating a balanced diet.

Nutritional labeling will also be a help in calorie control. It will make people realize that all foods contain calories. They will also be able to see that the serving size is important in weight control.

There are lots of people with diseases of the heart and the blood vessels. It's very important for them to know the amount of fat in their diets. Nutritional labeling will give them this information.

Some people are known as hypertensives. For them the salt content of foods is important. Nutritional labeling will be good for them, too.

WORDS TO KNOW

processed food -- a food that has had something done to it between being picked and sold to you. It may have been canned, frozen, milled, combined, dehydrated or processed in some other way.

nutritional labeling -- a label that tells you about the nutrition of a product.

essential nutrients -- these are things like vitamins, minerals, protein, fats, carbohydrates, and calories. A certain amount of each is needed every day to be healthy.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Make a list of all the vitamins. Learn about two foods that are a good source of each vitamin. Find out what each vitamin does for you.

2. Make a list of the minerals you need to eat. Find out about two foods that are good sources for each of these minerals. Learn what these minerals do for you.

3. Make a collage of pictures that show foods that are good for you.

4. Figure out which nutrients the school lunch of the day provides for you.

5. Write down everything you eat during one day. Then see if you ate some of each of the nutrients.

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